

REMARKS

Claims 10, 11 and 16 are canceled without prejudice, and therefore claims 12 to 15 and 17 to 21 are now pending.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of this response.

It is believed that this Amendment does not raise new issues that would require further consideration and/or search, and also does not raise the issue of new matter. It is also believed and respectfully submitted that this Amendment places the application in better form for appeal by materially reducing or simplifying the issues for appeal.

With respect to paragraph five (5) of the Final Office Action, Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 12 to 14 and 17 to 21.

With respect to paragraph (4), claims 10, 11, 15 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,640,073 ("Ikeda") in view of United States Patent No. 6,078,158 ("Hereen").

Although the rejections may not be agreed with for the reasons provided in the prior Responses, to facilitate matters, claims 10, 11 and 16 have been canceled without prejudice, and the dependency of claim 15 has been changed from canceled claim 10 to allowed claim 12. It is therefore respectfully requested that the obviousness rejections be withdrawn since claims 10, 11 and 16 have been canceled and since claim 15 now depends from allowed claim 12.

In summary, it is respectfully submitted that claim 15 is allowable -- like allowed claims 12 to 14 and 17 to 21.

CONCLUSION

In view of all of the above, it is believed that the rejections have been obviated, and that currently pending claim 15 is allowable -- like allowed claims 12 to 14 and 17 to 21. It

is*therefore respectfully requested that the rejections be reconsidered and withdrawn, and that the present application issue as early as possible.

Respectfully submitted,
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